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Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 PC-01 IGA-02 EB-08 EUR-12
CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00
NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OES-07
OMB-01 TRSE-00 /093 W
----------076210 131454Z /44
P R 131055Z SEP 77
FM AMEMBASSY BANGUI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9246
INFO AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGUI 1988

E.O.11652: GDS
TAGS: EAID, PFOR, CT, US
SUBJ: REQUEST FOR WELL DRILLING AT IMPERIAL COURT

REF: BANGUI 1731

SUMMARY: CHARGE RECEIVED OFFICIAL REQUEST FROM IMPERIAL COURT AUGUST 13 FOR 40 WELLS TO BE DRILLED AT AND AROUND IMPERIAL COURT UNDER EXISTING AID/PEACE CORPS WELL DRILLING PROJECT. CHARGE EXPLAINED THAT PROJECT AGREEMENT SPECIFIED ALL WELLS TO BE DRILLED IN FIVE NORTHERN PREFECTURES AND THAT EXCEPTION WOULD REQUIRE AUTHORIZATION FROM WASHINGTON. BASED ON INFORMAL CONTACT WITH AID/YAOUNDE, CHARGE SAID REPEATEDLY THAT HE DOUBTED VERY MUCH SUCH AUTHORIZATION WOULD BE FORTHCOMING AND URGED COURT REPRESENTATIVE TO SEEK DRILLING EQUIPMENT ELSEWHERE. CHARGE IS PREPARED TO CONFIRM NEGATIVE RESPONSE WHEN SO DIRECTED BY DEPT AND AID. END SUMMARY.

1. IMPERIAL COURT MINISTER OF FJE DALLO-BEFFIO SUMMONED CHARGE AUGUST 13 TO PRESENT LETTER FROM HIM TO AMBASSADOR REQUESTING THAT HE INTERVENE WITH USG SO THAT "ABSOLUTE PRIORITY" COULD BE ACCORDED FOR THE DRILLING OF 40 WELLS, OF WHICH 11 WOULD BE AT THE IMPERIAL COURT 50 MILES SOUTHWEST OF BANGUI, 13 IN CONFIDENTIAL

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THE VILLAGES IMMEDIATELY AROUND THE IMPERIAL COURT, AND 13 ON THE BANGUI-MBAIKI ROAD. THE LETTER REQUESTS PRIORITY EXECUTION BECAUSE OF SOCIAL, SCHOOL AND RESIDENTIAL CONSTRUCTION AT THE IMPERIAL COURT. IT NOTES THAT THERE IS LITTLE WATER IN THE BERENGO AREA AND THAT WELLS ARE THE ONLY SOLUTION.

2. REQUEST STEMS FROM INTEREST SHOWN IN WELLS EQUIPMENT BY

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FRENCH ADVISER AT PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT AND VISIT HE ARRANGED TO BERENGO FOR PEACE CORPS DIRECTOR AND WELLS VOLUNTEERS AUGUST 12 (REFTEL). SINCE THEN PEACE CORPS HAS TRIED TO AVOID FURTHER INVOLVEMENT IN PROJECT. FOLLOWING RECEIPT OF INFORMAL REACTION FROM AID/YAOUNDE PEACE CORPS INFORMED FRENCH ADVISER THAT THERE WOULD BE PROBLEMS BECAUSE OF LANGUAGE OF PROJECT AGREEMENT.

3. DALLO-BEFFIO REPEATED THE MAJOR POINTS OF THE LETTER IN HIS ORAL PRESENTATION, ADDING THAT THERE WERE IN FACT ONLY THREE OR FOUR STREAMS BETWEEN BANGUI AND THE IMPERIAL COURT. HE SAID THAT HE HAD BEEN VERY IMPRESSED BY THE AID EQUIPMENT AND TECHNIQUE. THE ONLY WAY HE COULD SEE TO GET THE WELLS DRILLED QUICKLY WAS TO USE THAT EQUIPMENT, WHICH WAS ALREADY IN BANGUI.

4. IN REPLY CHARGE GAVE DALLO-BEFFIO A COPY OF THE PROJECT AGREEMENT (676-202-76-02) AND POINTED OUT THAT PARAGRAPH C.2.1 SPECIFIED THAT WELLS COULD BE DRILLED "ONLY IN THE VILLAGES IN THE PREFECTURE OF OUHAM, OUHAM-PENDE, BAMINGUI-BANGORAN, VAKAGA AND GRIBINGUI" AND THAT THE ONLY EXCEPTION WOULD BE FOR TWO TEST WELLS, ONE TO BE DRILLED AT DAMARA AND THE OTHER AT BIMBO. CHARGE EXPLAINED THAT HE HAD WRITTEN TO AID/YAOUNDE ABOUT THE PROPOSAL TO DRILL WELLS AT AND AROUND THE IMPERIAL COURT. AID/YAOUNDE'S RESPONSE HAD BEEN NEGATIVE. ANY CHANGE IN THE AGREEMENT WOULD REQUIRE WASHINGTON'S APPROVAL, AND CHARGE DOUBTED VERY MUCH THAT THIS WOULD BE FORTHCOMING BECAUSE THE CONFIDENTIAL

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PROJECT HAD BEEN FINANCED BY MONEY SPECIFICALLY APPROPRIATED BY CONGRESS FOR SAHEL REHABILITATION. NORTHERN FIVE PREFECTURES OF CAE HAD IN FACT BEEN HIT BY DROUGHT IN '74 AND ON THE BASIS OF THIS AID HAD BEEN ABLE TO JUSTIFY USING SAHEL MONEY TO DRILL WELLS THERE. CHARGE EXPLAINED THAT EMBASSY WAS AWARE THAT WELLS WERE NEEDED ELSEWHERE IN THE CAE AND HAD SUBMITTED A PROJECT FOR DRILLING IN OTHER PREFECTURES. HOWEVER, EVEN IF APPROVED THIS PROJECT COULD NOT START BEFORE 1979. CHARGE REPEATED SEVERAL TIMES THAT WHILE HE WOULD TRANSMIT THE MINISTER OF STATE'S REQUEST TO WASHINGTON, HE DID NOT EXPECT TO RECEIVE A FAVORABLE RESPONSE. HE SAID THAT HE THOUGHT IT WAS NOT A GOOD TIME FOR SUCH A REQUEST AS FAR AS CONGRESS WAS CONCERNED.
HE NOTED THAT HE THOUGHT THERE WAS OTHER DRILLING EQUIPMENT IN BANGUI THAT MIGHT BE SUITABLE AND SUGGESTED THAT THE GOVERNMENT LOOK INTO USING IT.

5. DALLO-BEFFIO AGAIN STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE AND URGENCY OF THE PROJECT, NOTING THAT CAE WAS SEEKING USG CONTRIBUTION AS IT WAS SEEKING CONTRIBUTIONS OF OTHER FRIENDLY COUNTRIES TO VARIOUS PROJECTS/

6. COMMENT: NO REFERENCE WAS MADE ABOUT RECENT PROBLEMS BETWEEN

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US AND CAE EXCEPT FOR CHARGE'S VAGUE REMARK THAT IT WAS NOT A GOOD TIME AS FAR AS THE CONGRESS WAS CONCERNED. STAGE IS THUS SET FOR A NEGATIVE RESPONSE BASED ON THE WORDING OF THE PROJECT AGREEMENT AND THE SOURCE OF FUNDS. QUESTION IS WHEN RESPONSE SHOULD BE DELIVERED. EMPEROR BOKASSA WILL UNDOUBTEDLY NOT UNDERSTAND USG INABILITY TO AID IN A PROJECT OF SUCH PERSONAL IMPORTANCE TO HIM. HE COULD CONCEIVABLY RETALIATE AGAINST WELLS OR OTHER AID PROJECTS. HOWEVER, WE THINK IT EQUALLY LIKELY THAT "NO" WILL SIMPLY RESULT IN FURTHER COOLING OF RELATIONS AND EVEN LESS ACCESS. WE SEE CERTAIN ADVANTAGES IN GETTING NEGATIVE RESPONSE OUT OF THE WAY BEFORE THE RETURN OF THE AMBASSADOR WITH WHATEVER MESSAGE HE MAY BE CARRYING. DEPT PLEASE ADVISE.
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Message Attributes

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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
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Disposition History: n/a
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SAS ID: 1300730
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: REQUEST FOR WELL DRILLING AT IMPERIAL COURT
TAGS: EAID, PFOR, SENV, CT, US
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkvgwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/ec4f0548-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
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